



July 13, 2004

MANAGERS, OPERATIONS SUPPORT (AREA)
MANAGERS, DELIVERY PROGRAMS (DISTRICT)
MANAGERS, RETAIL (DISTRICT)
MANAGERS, IN-PLANT SUPPORT (PLANT)

SUBJECT: Basic Emergency Notification Plan for Off-Site Employees

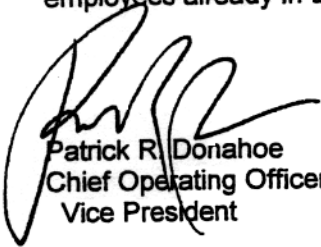
The attached "Emergency Notification for Off-Site Employees" was developed with the assistance of the National Association of Letter Carriers, National Rural Letter Carrier Association, and the American Postal Workers Union. This document provides guidance for post offices and postal facilities in establishing basic notification procedures that can facilitate contact with off-site employees in the event of an emergency.

This emergency notification plan describes one alternative that postal facilities can use in notifying off-site employees in the event of an emergency. These procedures can also serve as a backup plan in case other procedures (electronic communication, telephones, pagers, etc.) are not available or not functioning. This guidance is not intended to replace effective notification procedures for off-site employees already established at a postal facility. In cases where a postal facility has already implemented a notification plan for off-site employees, that office is asked to provide a description and copies of documents related to that plan to the Manager, Operations Support at their area office.

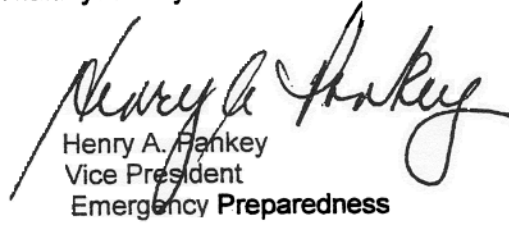
The "Emergency Notification for Off-Site Employees" attachment provides guidance on establishing a structure for communications with off-site employees in the event of an emergency. The content of the message and guidance about what actions should be taken should follow (and be consistent with) the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), Integrated Emergency Action Plan (IEMP), and other emergency planning documents for the facility.

Employee knowledge, awareness and understanding of the local COOP, IEMP, and other emergency planning documents, and procedures that will be used for notification of employees in the event of an emergency are critical elements for effective response to and management of emergency situations. Additional guidance and improvements to the Postal Service's emergency preparedness plans will be implemented on an ongoing basis. In addition to the guidance concerning one version of a basic notification procedure described in the attachment, the Postal Service is continuing to explore both current and future technological enhancements for notification of off-site employees during emergency situations.

Please disseminate this information to all postal facilities and postmasters in each district and assist these facilities as needed with implementation of notification plans for off-site employees at their facilities. We look forward to receiving feedback and suggestions from the area offices about notification plans for off-site employees already in use at individual postal facilities. Thank you for your assistance with these efforts.



Patrick R. Donahoe
Chief Operating Officer and Executive
Vice President



Henry A. Pankey
Vice President
Emergency Preparedness

Attachment

- cc: Mr. Rapp
Mr. Galligan
Mr. Vegliante
Mr. Vogel
Mr. Pulcrano
Managers, Delivery Programs Support (Area)

INTERIM OFF-SITE EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION PLAN – FOR EMPLOYEES PERFORMING WORK OUTSIDE OF THEIR POSTAL FACILITY

All postal facilities maintain emergency and contingency plans to address emergency situations that may arise. These plans guide employees and managers in the protection of employees, customers, and postal assets during emergency situations. Because large numbers of employees perform duties away from postal facilities (carriers, drivers, SSPC technicians, etc.), this Off-Site Emergency Notification Plan outlines procedures that can facilitate efficient notification of these employees in the event of an emergency or hazardous situation. Emergency and hazardous situations may include severe weather, tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, accidental hazardous materials releases and the possibility of an act of terrorism. This document focuses on the procedures used to notify off-site employees in the event of an emergency. The actual message, and actions that the employee would take, would be part of more detailed continuity of operations plans and emergency planning documents. Include a copy of this Off-Site Emergency Notification Plan with other contingency and emergency action plan documents.

Differences in the work locations and environments for off-site assignments at each postal facility require specific notification plans, emergency plans, and continuity of operations plans tailored to the local circumstances and potential hazards within each facility's service area. Installation heads must ensure that emergency plans are thorough, and also capable of providing guidance under any conditions that might arise. Installation heads must also assure that all employees are aware of and review these plans (as appropriate for each employee), and the impacts on these plans on employees. Emergency and contingency plans should include regular reinforcement of awareness by all employees of emergency plan components, including those who routinely perform work outside their postal facility. In developing these plans, managers should consider the following outline of elements and procedures for notifying employees away from the office, and providing guidance to off site employees on appropriate actions to take to protect themselves during emergency situations. Each postal facility should incorporate into employee notification plans information about any general notification systems in place in their community, such as sirens, horns, specialized radio or television broadcasts, police or fire department actions, etc.

ESTABLISH A PROCESS TO NOTIFY EMPLOYEES ON THE STREET OR OUT OF THE OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Notification and contact with off-site employees about an emergency can involve a variety of circumstances. The emergency situation may have impacted the facility, impacted the service area of the facility, or involve a personal emergency impacting a specific off-site employee. If a serious emergency occurs at the postal facility, in addition to notification of off-site employees about the emergency, it may be necessary to advise off-site employees to report to an alternate facility (identified in emergency planning documents) immediately, or upon completion of assigned duties.

The method for notifying off-site employees will vary based upon local circumstances and the nature of their duties. Descriptions of any systems in place in the community to notify residents of emergencies should be included in the postal facility's notification plan, to help postal employees recognize and respond to public announcements of emergencies. In some circumstances off-site employees can be contacted via two-way radio, cell phones, pagers or other electronic means. City Letter Carriers represent the largest number of "off-site" employees within the Postal Service. Because carriers and other employees performing work "off-site" may not have electronic communications devices, in many cases it will be necessary to initiate an efficient person to person notification plan or other alternatives. The following "notification tree" or "buddy system" format for off-site employees will allow fast and efficient notification of a large number of off-site employees. Managers must assess the nature of the emergency when deciding to implement this type of plan. Employees should not be sent into the affected area if it would endanger their safety. The extent to which employees should participate in further "tree type" notifications will also depend on the nature and extent of the emergency. Rural Carriers may not perform work in close proximity to other carriers, in which case other alternatives for emergency contact such as cellular telephone numbers or pre-arranged contact by notices from customers on the rural route can be established.

ESTABLISH A "NOTIFICATION TREE" OR "BUDDY SYSTEM" TO NOTIFY EMPLOYEES IN THE FIELD IF AN EMERGENCY OCCURS.

Each facility should develop a written plan outlining the notification process, and any systems used in the community to broadcast information about emergencies. The notification plan should be reviewed and updated as necessary, but not less than once each 6 months. A master "matrix" of the notification plan should be maintained, and protected as confidential information (available for review by managers, employees and unions). Notification for employees not contacted by other means will begin with specific managers or employees notifying employees at their off-site work location. Specific employees in the "tree" will have designated "buddies" to contact to expedite the notification process. Local management, union representatives and employees should work together to solicit volunteers to notify other employees using the "notification tree/buddy system." When developing their local notification plans, managers can utilize the following tools and procedures for guidance:

1. Managed Service Point printouts, PS Form 3999X, PS Form 4003, maintenance schedules, and other tools that show approximate locations of employees at specific times during the work day (or night).
2. Utilize office personnel to call off-site employees who have provided their personal cell phone/pager numbers. Providing personal cell phone/pager numbers is voluntary. Use of these numbers will be restricted to emergency situations only. Management must maintain the confidentiality of this information.
3. Contact nearby facilities (if they are not also impacted) if assistance with the notification process is needed.
4. Contact local first responders (police, fire dept., etc) and ask them to relay information to postal employees they may encounter.
5. Provide a written emergency document for each employee in the "tree". The emergency document should contain approximate locations of the nearby or adjacent "buddy" employee(s), to assist employees in notifying their respective "buddies." In most cases, limit the number of "buddies" to 3, meaning that no more than two additional contacts are required (see the following example).
6. Identify specific "contact customers" that could be called to ascertain the approximate location of the employee based upon whether or not the employee had completed assignments (such as mail delivery) at the location.
7. Establish a sign-out log or other document for employees with intermittent duties outside the postal facility, to assist in communications with these employees if the need arises.

EMERGENCY INSTRUCTIONS FOR EMPLOYEES ON THE STREET/OUT OF THE OFFICE

Each facility must ensure that employees are aware of the proper procedures to follow in the event of an emergency while away from the facility. Employees must take appropriate action based upon the local circumstances and the nature of the emergency. Service talks regarding these steps should be provided and documented on a regular basis. Employees working outside of their postal facility should consider the following guidelines, and take the appropriate action for the situation they are involved with.

1. Assess the threat or hazard, if possible. If you have a portable radio with you, tune it to a local news station to obtain additional details and instructions regarding the nature of the emergency and actions to be taken.
2. If danger is imminent, seek appropriate shelter in a local business or residence. If possible, report your location, your condition, nature of the emergency and a callback phone number to your post office or alternate facility. Your vehicle may provide a means of shelter or escape from the threat or hazard, but will probably not be adequate shelter in the event of a biohazard or toxic gas event.
3. If you hear a local civil defense warning siren, ask a customer or local authority for information on the nature of the emergency. Ask what instructions have been issued by civil authorities. In emergencies such as these, employees should follow the instructions of local authorities.
4. Attempt to contact your primary office, or the alternate facility, to obtain further guidance. Employees should be familiar with alternate site location(s) specified in emergency planning documents.
5. If you are injured or are becoming ill, seek immediate and appropriate medical attention. If necessary, request assistance from customers or others in contacting emergency personnel. If you are able to proceed to the nearest medical facility without endangering your safety, do so. Notify your office of your location and condition as soon as possible. Be sure to provide a callback phone number.
6. If you must leave your vehicle, secure mail and/or postal assets and lock the doors. Contact the office and provide the exact location of the vehicle and your present location. Provide a call back number if possible.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD

Emergency contact information needs to be readily available. Managers should create an emergency document for placement in vehicles and for employees to carry, containing basic emergency numbers and a listing of appropriate actions to take in an emergency. A sample emergency information card follows that lists the "buddy employee" locations and times. For other types of work, a different format for the information card would be needed.:

CARRIER ROUTE NUMBER _____ or OTHER OFF-SITE ASSIGNMENT _____

Home Office Info:

Main Street Station
 600 Main Street
 Anytown, USA
 Primary Office phone number
 2nd Office phone number

Alternate Postal facility

Austin Station
 901 North Ave
 Another Town, USA
 Primary Office Phone Number
 Alternate Postal facility

Location Of:

Nearest Hospital
 Nearest Police Station
 1st Public Telephone
 2nd Public Telephone
 3rd Public telephone

IN AN EMERGENCY:

1. Assess the threat or hazard, if possible. If you have a portable radio with you, tune it to a local news station to obtain additional details and instructions regarding the nature of the emergency and actions to be taken.
2. If danger is imminent, seek appropriate shelter in a local business or residence. If possible, report your location, your condition, nature of the emergency and a callback phone number to the local postal facility. While vehicles may provide a means of shelter or escape from the threat or hazard, this may not be true for biohazard events or events involving toxic gas or fumes.
3. If you hear a local civil defense warning siren, ask a customer for information on the nature of the emergency. Ask what instructions have been issued by civil authorities. Employees should follow the direction of local civil authorities.
4. Attempt to contact your primary office, or the alternate facility, to obtain further guidance. Employees should be familiar with the alternate site location and actions to be taken based on emergency plans.
5. If you are injured or are becoming ill, seek immediate and appropriate medical attention. Request assistance from a customer in contacting emergency personnel if necessary. If you are able to proceed to the nearest medical facility without endangering your safety, do so. Notify your office of your location and condition as soon as possible. Be sure to provide a callback phone number.
6. If you must leave your vehicle, secure any mail and postal property and lock the doors. Contact the office and provide the exact location of the vehicle and your present location. Provide a call back number if possible.

Locations and times of adjacent "Buddy Employees" (in this case carrier routes):

BUDDY EMPLOYEE # 1
 119 E Orchard St 09:15
 123 E. Apple Rd 10:00
 600 Marengo 11:00
 301 First St 12:00
 1200 Smith Rd 13:00
 701 Harlem Ave 14:00

BUDDY EMPLOYEE #2
 801 Main st 09:15
 1900 Smith Rd 10:00
 1200 24th St 11:00
 400 Knollwood 12:00
 601 Elgin Ave 13:00
 1600 Troost St 14:00

BUDDY EMPLOYEE #3"
 545 Argyle Rd 09:15
 590 Crosat St 10:00
 701 Joliet St 11:00
 1800 Madison 12:00
 801 Circle Ave 13:00
 701 Lathrop 14:00

cell phone or pager number if known:

cell phone or pager number if known:

cell phone or pager number if known: